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## POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY.

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### CONTROL OF IMMIGRATION. II.

#### *Do We Need the Immigrants?*

IMMIGRATION, as has been shown in a former paper, has assumed such immense proportions in this country, that a very large alien element has already been introduced into our population; and it has also been shown that there are various indications that the character of the immigrants is deteriorating. These facts of themselves, if the evidence were perfectly clear and convincing, would lead us to think of instituting some measure of control in order to protect ourselves against the evil consequences which might ensue. But it is one of the difficulties of the question that the evidence cannot be perfectly clear and convincing. It can only be suggestive or indicative. We can only point out symptoms and make predictions. The part of Cassandra is always a disagreeable and ungrateful one. Prophecies of evil are always answered by an appeal to general principles and to past immunity. We shall be accused of taking a petty and narrow view of the action of social forces; and the past history of the country will be pointed to triumphantly as an exemplification of the grand effect of letting things take their own course. It will be expedient, therefore, to add to our previous inquiries a further one, and, admitting that immigration has in the past done all that is claimed, and that it has on the whole been a good and not an evil, it will be well to consider whether we any longer need the immigrants. Should we not be better off without them than with them? Would not our future political and economic development be

smoother and more tranquil without this constant addition of foreign elements?

Perfect freedom of immigration has been defended on two grounds—the one ideal, the other practical. Freedom of migration is sometimes asserted to be a natural right of man and one of the products of political liberty with which we have no business to interfere. Coupled with this argument the notion frequently appears that this country was destined to be an asylum for the oppressed of all nations and that to refuse to allow them to come would be to prove faithless to our duty. On the other hand, unrestricted immigration has been defended on the ground of the immense economic advantage of this constant addition to the labor force of the community. It is proposed to deal here only with the second of these reasons. The first is a question of principle and of political science and will need separate treatment.

The economic advantage of the constant addition to our working population of these immigrants, a majority of them males and largely in the most productive and strongest period of early manhood, has been often insisted upon. European economists have seen with regret this depletion of their strength, and we have had a lively sense that we were getting the better of the effete monarchies of Europe by luring from them their strong young men. The estimates of these advantages however have always been of the most vague and general character. It has been taken for granted, and very rightly too, that with our immense unoccupied territory almost any addition to our population was useful in developing our resources and was to be welcomed. Further, it has been felt that what was mourned as a loss by the countries of Europe must be a corresponding gain to us. The time has come when we should seek to determine more exactly the quantity and quality of this gain in our present stage of development, and not go on trusting to the generalizations of a quarter of a century ago when the condition of things was entirely different. It is above all necessary to get rid of the idea that what is a loss to the countries of Europe is of necessity a gain to us. To Germany,

for instance, emigration may or may not be a loss. The Germans themselves are not agreed upon that point at the present time. But however it may be with Germany, the question which confronts us is distinct and independent. Whether the immigrants are a gain to us depends upon our own social and economic condition. Let us, then, endeavor to determine what economic gain accrues to us from immigration.

The economic gain consists in the extent to which the labor force of the community is increased; in the amount of property which the immigrants bring with them; and in the money value of the immigrants themselves, reckoned upon the basis of what they will produce compared with what they have cost or will cost the community. It will be worth our while to examine each of these points in detail.

But before discussing these questions, it is necessary to explain the sense in which I use the word "immigrants," — *i.e.* to define the boundary which separates the earlier American stock from the later immigration. By the American or native stock, I mean the colonists. the men who settled the country and placed the initial imprint upon its civilization; who determined, at the outset, its language, its laws and its institutions. By immigrants I mean those who came after the state was established and society had taken form. The year 1790 is a convenient point at which to draw the line between the two classes, because at that time the political and social organization of the country was fairly settled, and the first census was taken.

Now there is an impression that the present population of this country is due far more to immigration than to the natural increase of the native stock.<sup>1</sup> It is further believed that the

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr. Friedrich Kapp is responsible for many of the absurd notions afloat about the extraordinary influence of immigration on the population of this country. Following a certain Mr. Schrade, — who had attempted to show to a convention of brewers, alarmed by the prohibition movement, that the "Yankees" had really had very little to do with the making of this country and were already in a minority, — Kapp started with the excess of births over deaths returned by the census of 1850. This excess was 1.38 per cent of the free population. Working with this figure and on a basis of a total white and free colored population in 1790 of 3,231,390, Kapp calculated that their descendants in 1865 would have amounted to 9,034,245. The total population at that date, exclusive of the newly enfranchised

fruitfulness of the native stock is decreasing, and that we shall be dependent upon the immigrants and their descendants for any further growth in our numbers. There is absolutely no trustworthy foundation for either of these conceptions. In the absence of a registration of births and deaths in the United States, it is impossible to say how many of the present inhabitants of the United States are descendants of the native element, and how many of the immigrants. There are two ways in which we can guess at it. One is on the basis of the 14,955,966 persons in the United States in 1880 who had one or both parents foreign-born. That number represents the survivors of the immigrants and their descendants to one generation. But many of the immigrants who came in the earlier years are now represented by the third or in some cases even by the fourth generation. These should be added to the previous number. The number of immigrants who arrived here previous to 1850

slaves, was nearly 30,000,000, so that immigration had added 20,965,975 persons. The foreign-born and their descendants were therefore more than twice as numerous as the descendants of the original American population!—See Kapp, *Immigration and the Commissioners of Emigration*, p. 152.

The fallacy of Kapp's estimate was exposed in the most convincing way by the late Dr. Edward Jarvis, in the April number of the *Atlantic Monthly* for 1872. He showed that the percentage 1.38, which Schrade took out of the census for 1850, was in no sense the real excess of births over deaths and was not put forward by the census as such. He showed, further, that the returns of births and deaths made to the census were so incomplete that absolutely no birth-rate or death-rate of any value could be figured from those returns. In addition it is altogether ridiculous to take a birth-rate or an excess-rate of 1850 and carry it back to the early years of the century when we know that the increase was very large. In respect to Kapp's figures, Dr. Jarvis showed that the foreign-born and their descendants, as he gave them for the year 1865, could be accounted for only by a much greater immigration in the early years than the official figures show, or by an enormous fruitfulness of the immigrant women. But Kapp accepts the figures of immigration as substantially correct, and on that basis, during the years 1790-1800, every female immigrant between the ages of 20 and 40 must have lived in uninterrupted wedlock and have borne 18.07 children each year. During the decade 1800-1810 each female immigrant of that age must have lived in uninterrupted wedlock and have borne 10.13 children each year. During the decade 1810-1820 each such female must have lived in wedlock and borne 1.9 children each year. From 1820 to 1830 each woman must have had a child every sixteen and a half months; and during the decade 1830-1840, a child every fifteen months. The statement, therefore, that in 1865 only nine million descendants of the original American population were living is altogether absurd.

was nearly 2,500,000. Granting that these immigrants are now probably represented by grandchildren, and in some cases by great-grandchildren, and that by the natural increase of each succeeding generation the number would have doubled, we shall have five millions to add to the first number, making about twenty millions in all. This however is only guess work.

A second method of estimating the number of our present population who are of foreign descent was pointed out by Dr. Edward Jarvis.<sup>1</sup> He calculated the natural rate of increase from decade to decade by taking the increase reported by the census and subtracting from it the number of immigrants who had arrived during the decade and their increase. This rate of increase he applied then to the native and foreign-born alike—an assumption which was of course entirely arbitrary but which was necessary, there being no data upon which to base any distinction. By this method of computation, it appeared that in 1870 the number of whites of foreign descent was 11,607,394 and the number of native descent was 21,479,595. Carrying on the same calculation to 1880, it appears that the number of foreign descent was probably about twenty millions and of native descent about twenty-five millions. Using the rate of increase of the decade 1870-1880 to carry the calculation still further, it would appear that at the close of 1887 the whites of foreign descent numbered about twenty-four millions, and of American descent twenty-eight millions.

These results are sufficiently startling when we are considering the constituent elements of our population, but they dissipate the absurd claims of some of our foreign-born citizens that the present power of the United States is due entirely to the immigration of foreigners since 1790. The calculation is based, of course, on the supposition of an equal share in the increase from decade to decade. But there is no evidence that the native-born have any less power of increase than the foreign-born. In Massachusetts it is said that the foreign-born women have a larger number of children than the native-born, but that a less number survive to maturity. By the census of 1885 it was shown

<sup>1</sup> In the *Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1872, vol. 29, p. 468.

that the proportion of married among the foreign-born in Massachusetts was but slightly greater than among the native-born.

But leaving the historical side of the question, and taking the problem as it stands,—the population that we are concerned with now is this mixed population of descendants of natives and foreigners. Its rate of increase is large enough to allay any fear lest by stopping immigration we should stop the increase of our numbers. From 1870 to 1880 the white population of the United States increased by 9,815,981. There arrived during the decade, 2,944,695 immigrants. In 1880 these immigrants had lived here an average of 3.7 years. Allowing them an increase during that period of two per cent per annum, the total number of immigrants and their increase down to 1880 would have been 3,162,502. This would leave 6,653,479 as the natural increase of the white population during the ten years. This means an increase of 19.48 per cent in ten years. The negroes probably increase faster than the whites, so that it does not seem at all improbable that the population of the United States is increasing naturally at the rate of two per cent per annum. That means that we are adding to our population every year 1,200,000 souls. If there had been no immigration since 1880, we should have numbered in 1890, 60,000,000 persons. We reached that number last year, so that immigration has enabled us to anticipate the growth of a decade by three years.

Will not this natural increase of population, which is now over one million per annum and in a few years will probably be a million and a half per annum, be sufficient to give us all the labor force that is necessary for the development of the country?

We may profitably in this connection consider for a moment the law of population as laid down by the economists and, in certain phases of it applicable here, admitted by all. Every population has an almost unlimited power of natural increase. This natural increase is checked by the lack of food or by such destructive influences as wars, pestilences, vice, crime, *etc.* From all these checks the United States, during the greater part of its history, has been remarkably free. There is also the so-called prudential check, namely, that population will not in-

crease so as to lower its standard of living. Men will marry later or have a smaller number of children rather than give up for themselves and their children the comforts to which they have been accustomed. Within these limits population will respond to any demand for increased numbers. That is shown in the case of Germany, where the loss by emigration has constantly been made up by an enormous birth-rate. So, in the United States, there is no doubt that any increased demand for labor, at the rates of remuneration which would allow of the present standard of comfort being maintained, would be responded to at once. Of course at the beginning of a process of colonization, when the number of inhabitants is very small, such a response can be made only in part, and under those circumstances immigration may be a necessary adjunct. But our population has passed beyond that point. Any increased demand for labor compatible with the maintenance of the present standard of living will be responded to by natural increase.

What are we doing, now, when we admit these thousands of foreigners every year, many of them with a lower standard of living than prevails in this country? We are simply adding to our population without any regard to the standard of living. It is difficult at the best to induce a population to adopt the prudential restraint,—to refrain from getting married, and having children unless there is a reasonable prospect that their children will be able to maintain themselves in the same habits of life as their parents,—but a continuous immigration removes even that possibility, for the place which would have been taken by the children is now taken by the foreigner. Every reward for self-restraint and prudence is thus taken away.

The ideal sort of population is not one that increases with enormous rapidity. It is one where there is a small number of births, a small number of deaths, and a long average of life, and where the people are kept in good health and strength. Such an ideal population can exist only where there is a high standard of living, where there is prudence and self-restraint, and where there is the hope that the position of the children may be better than that of the fathers. It is not possible where the

chance of bettering their condition is cut off by constant competition, where the standard of living is dragged lower and lower, and where an artificial stimulus is put on the increase of population. It is all very well to preach to the laborer habits of thrift and forethought; but the lesson will be of no avail if the conditions are such that the habits are of no avail. Besides, if we are to have an increase of population, is it not better to have it by natural increase? Is it not better to train up the new workers in our ways, to have them familiar with our language, our customs, our habits, our methods of production? Would it not be easier to fit such persons to the places where they are needed than the mass of unskilled labor that comes to us from abroad without any regard to the demand for labor here? Such an increased labor-force would be more homogeneous, would be better trained, and would have a higher standard of living, than that which we get in the present blind way.

Behind the vague and general feeling against any restriction of immigration which exists in many quarters, there are two motives which come out more or less clearly into consciousness. One is the feeling of employers and capitalists that they would thereby cut off the supply of labor and thus put themselves at the mercy of the labor organizations. There is perhaps among these employers no positive desire that the standard of living in this country shall be reduced and labor thus be made cheaper; but there is a well-defined feeling against restricting the supply of labor. A second motive, much more wide-spread and influencing not only the employers of labor but all citizens, is the belief that immigration is an immense economic gain to the community, and that by restricting it we should suffer a dead loss. Let us examine the grounds of this belief.

The immigrants, in the first place, bring with them a considerable amount of money. Each one sells what he has in the old country and brings the proceeds, in the shape of money or drafts or goods, to be invested in the new. In this way there is a constant stream of capital flowing from Europe to the United States which never appears in the statistics of imports and which has not to be offset by exports. This is a clear economic gain, and when

the immigration is heavy this invisible supply of wealth is very considerable and adds to our general prosperity. Various attempts have been made to ascertain how much this sum amounts to. In 1856 the immigrants who landed at the port of New York were asked how much money they had with them, and the average was \$68.08 *per capita*. It was said at the time that this amount was probably too small, because many of the immigrants would be apt to suspect that the question was asked from some fiscal motive and would put the amount too low. Kapp in particular thought the amount was too low, and estimated that the amount brought by each immigrant was at least \$100. This would indicate that there was an annual movement of thirty or forty or fifty millions of gold to this country which did not appear in the balance of trade — no inconsiderable sum. At the present time Kapp's estimate is probably too large. Our immigrants come more and more from the poorer classes of society, so that the sum *per capita* brought in 1856 is probably no longer brought now. We have some German estimates which indicate a smaller sum; and whatever the Germans bring, it is probable that the Irish, the Italians, the Hungarians, *etc.*, bring still less. The latest German authority<sup>1</sup> estimates that the emigrants take with them from 300 to 400 marks each, that is from \$75 to \$100. An Italian able to raise that sum of money for each member of his family would never think of leaving home.

It must be granted, however, that the immigrants do bring with them a certain amount of wealth, although that amount is probably not very large at the present time. Against this, two things are to be taken into consideration. One is that the inflow of gold into this country is offset by the outflow due to remittances to friends abroad. These remittances are either for the purpose of supporting those who have been left behind, or of paying their passage to this country. Their exact amount has never been ascertained, as they go for the most part through the hands of private bankers or steamship companies. Mr. Giffen prints every year, in "The Statistical Tables relating to Emigration and Immigration from and into the United Kingdom," a

<sup>1</sup> Becker, *Unsere Verluste durch Wanderung*, in Schmoller's *Jahrbücher* XI, S. 776.

table of the amount of such remittances, furnished through the courtesy of certain bankers and mercantile houses. The table is not at all complete, for there is no means of ascertaining the amount transmitted through private parties and firms unwilling to make a return. Since 1848 no less than £32,294,596 have been thus sent back by settlers in the United States and British North America. In the year 1886 the amount was £1,276,033. The number of emigrants of British and Irish origin going to the United States and British North America during the year was 177,455, so that for the money that each emigrant took out with him we know that a sum equal to \$35 was returned. We must also remember that there is a tide of returning immigration to the old countries. Many of the emigrants, after they have acquired what to them is a competence, return to pass the remainder of their days in the old country. All these returning emigrants carry money with them and often, doubtless, large sums. Thus in 1886 there were no less than 60,076 persons of British and Irish origin who returned to the United Kingdom from the United States and British North America. This would leave a net emigration of 117,379, and the money taken by these emigrants would be offset by the above sum of £1,276,033, equal to a *per capita* sum of \$52.84. Is it not probable that the balance is against the United States?

There is one other way of looking at this matter, when one is inclined to regard every dollar of money that the immigrants bring with them as so much gain to the United States. It has been suggested by the efforts of a German statistician to prove that the loss by emigration is not so great as it seems to be. Becker<sup>1</sup> remarks that when an emigrant takes 300 or 400 marks out of the country with him, he is not really taking his share of the national fortune. The *per capita* wealth of Germany is at least 3000 or 4000 marks, so that the sum each emigrant takes with him is only one-tenth part of the average national wealth. So long as emigration does not cripple the means of production, it simply leaves a proportionately larger share of the national wealth for every one who remains. If we turn to this country

<sup>1</sup> In the article cited above.

we shall meet the reverse phenomenon. The average wealth in this country must be at least \$1000 *per capita*. What does it mean when we add to the number of our citizens thousands who possess only \$100 each? Is the country by that fact alone better or worse off? The sum total of wealth has been increased, but the average well-being of the community has been decreased. These men add to the cost of the social organization, while they do not bring the property which is to pay the taxes to defray the cost of such organization. In a club there is always an initiation fee for new members; and as the club increases in prosperity and wealth this initiation fee is often raised, with the perfectly just feeling that membership in the club has come to be worth more than when it was first started. It will be said that the immigrant gives himself to the new country and thus pays his initiation fee. In that case the amount of money he brings with him is utterly insignificant. If he is worth having, it makes little difference whether he brings money with him or not. If he is not worth having, then the paltry sum that he brings does not begin to pay for the risk of receiving him.

The real economic gain to the United States by immigration consists in the value of the full-grown labor supplied to it without expense by the countries of Europe. Every person passes through two periods of life, — that of unproductive childhood when he is only a burden to the community, and that of productive manhood when he not only supports himself but reimburses the community for the cost of bringing him up. The longer this second period compared with the first, the better for the community, for the total cost of the unproductive period is spread over a greater number of years. The larger the number of persons in this second period compared with the first, the lighter is the burden upon the community, for it is shared by a larger number of persons. Of the immigrants into the United States, about 20 per cent are below the age of fifteen, about 70 per cent are between the ages of fifteen and forty, and the remaining 10 per cent are above the age of forty. In other words, four-fifths of the immigrants are in the second period, that of productive manhood, and the great mass of them in the most pro-

ductive part of that period, that of early manhood. These full-grown immigrants have been brought up by the countries of Europe and then presented to us able to support themselves and others. When one considers that the main effort of the world, after all, is to keep itself alive and to provide a future generation to take the place of the present, the economic value of such a gift is enormous. It is like a workman having the latest and best tools provided for him without expense while he is paid for the increased product on the same basis as if he had made the improvements.

To the countries of Europe emigration appears, in a similar way, as a dead loss. They bring up children to the full age of manhood and then lose them before the cost of their nurture is repaid. To Germany, for instance, the increase of population seems like a constant substitution of infants for full-grown men, Germany paying the expense of the operation in each case. That there is such a drain on Germany by emigration will be seen by a close study of the following very suggestive little table :

OUT OF 100 PERSONS THERE WERE<sup>1</sup>

| Of the Age —      | Among the<br>Emigrants. | In the German<br>Population. |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 0-10 years .....  | 27.1 .....              | 24.6                         |
| 10-20 “ .....     | 17.1 .....              | 19.7                         |
| 20-30 “ .....     | 30.7 .....              | 15.9                         |
| 30-40 “ .....     | 14.1 .....              | 13.4                         |
| 40-50 “ .....     | 6.3 .....               | 10.3                         |
| 50-60 “ .....     | 3.1 .....               | 8.4                          |
| 60-70 “ .....     | 1.3 .....               | 5.1                          |
| 70 and over ..... | 0.3 .....               | 2.5                          |

One sees at once the heavy drain on the population between the ages of 20 and 30. Germany is steadily losing a portion of

<sup>1</sup> *Monatshefte der Statistik des deutschen Reiches*, 1882, Januar, S. 17. Quoted by Rümelin (see below), who also says that while 39 per cent of the German population are between the ages of 15 and 40, over 60 per cent of the emigrants are in those years.—The same thing is shown by the following table, from *Statistisches Jahrbuch des deutschen Reiches*, 1882:

OF 1000 INHABITANTS OF EACH AGE THERE EMIGRATED IN 1880

| Under 10. | 10 to 20. | 20 to 30. | 30 to 40. | 40 to 50. | 50 to 60. | 60 to 70. | Over 70. |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 2.36      | 2.43      | 5.21      | 2.51      | 1.36      | 0.87      | 0.60      | 0.20     |

her population that is of the utmost value to her in every way, economically, socially, and for national defence. It is like an annual tribute paid to a foreign country, and, like some of the ancient tributes we read of, paid in choice men.

It would be absurd to contend that such a movement as we have depicted — the bodily transference of such a labor force from one country to another — has no economic significance. We study with care the statistics of imports and exports ; we watch with interest the movements of the precious metals ; we encourage industry by artificial tariff regulations ; and we are quite sure that all these things have an important influence on the prosperity of the community. Is it not probable that this shifting of labor is as important in its influence on the happiness of the community as the balance of trade or the fluctuations in the rate of discount ? No one can deny that such possibilities are present ; but it is necessary that we take care to judge this influence rightly and measure its force correctly.

Various attempts have been made to express in figures the economic value of the immigrant. The most common estimate of this sort and the one most widely known is due to Friedrich Kapp.<sup>1</sup> He simply values the immigrant at the cost of bringing him up. Kapp found an old estimate of Ernst Engel, the head of the Prussian bureau of statistics, that the cost of bringing up a child in Germany was \$30.00 a year for the first five years, \$37.50 a year for the second five years, and \$45.00 a year for the third five years, making a total of \$562.50 as the cost of bringing up a child to the age of fifteen, when it is presumably able to support itself. Kapp said that it would cost at least double that to bring up a child in the United States, so that the value of each immigrant above the age of fifteen is from \$1000 to \$1200. On this basis the money value of the immigration each year is very large. In the year 1886, for instance, the number of immigrants above the age of fifteen was 263,189. Taking them at the German valuation they represent a sum equal to nearly 170 million dollars, or at the American valuation a sum nearly twice that. The immigration of 1886 was not

<sup>1</sup> Kapp, *Immigration and the New York Commissioners, etc.*, p. 146.

excessive, — in fact it was below what it is now, — so that immigration represents hundreds of millions of dollars saved to the United States each year.

It is easy to point out how superficial this method of estimate is. As Rümelin says,<sup>1</sup> it belongs to the half-truths or pseudo-truths of political economy. The worth of a man is not measured by the cost of bringing him up, coupled with the consideration whether he has paid this cost back to the community. If that were true, a man's greatest worth would be when he first acquires physical strength; and the experienced man of forty would be of less value than the raw youth of eighteen. Nor is every man worth the cost of his bringing up. Of the immigrants into this country, some are already disabled, some will die in a few years, others will land in the poor-house and still others will be found in our asylums and jails, an absolute burden to the community to which they are said to be worth \$1000 each. The value of a man lies in his capacity and character, not in what it has cost to bring him up. If the immigrant finds an opportunity here to exercise the talents he possesses, he is of value to himself and to the community, whether it has cost \$500 or \$1000 to bring him to the age of manhood. If he is a vagabond, ignorant, lazy, or vicious, then he is worse than of no value to the community that receives him, and the country that has gotten rid of him may well be congratulated upon losing that form of capital.

This way of looking upon the cost of bringing up children as an investment of capital is wholly fallacious. The cost of rearing children can scarcely be said to be a loss of capital. It is true that they have cost the parents labor and sacrifice; but the sacrifice has been made and the parents are in the same position in which they would otherwise have been, save that they have worked harder and have not had so many enjoyments as they might have had. They have preferred to bring up the children instead. So also Kapp's statement that it costs double to bring up a child in this country compared with the cost of bringing

<sup>1</sup> Rümelin, Bevölkerungslehre, in Schönberg's Handbuch der Politischen Oekonomie, 2. Ausg., 2, 2, S. 916.

it up in Germany is in one sense true, but in another sense it shows the fallacy of the whole estimate. The reason why it costs double in this country is because we are so well off that we spend more on our children. We are so well off that we can afford to have children and to bring them up in an expensive way. That is the reason why our ancestors had such large families in the early days of the republic. Our forefathers were not wasting their capital, neither were they making an investment of capital; they were simply marrying and having large families because they were well to do. It is not to be looked upon as a matter of dollars and cents. It is a good thing, socially and morally, that men should have children and rear them. This forms the family tie and keeps up the continuity of social habits and traditions. If we could take our children at birth and send them over to Europe and have them brought up as German peasants or Irish cottiers or Italian lazzaroni at little or no expense,—would it pay us to do it?

A second method of estimating the economic value of the immigrant is to say that he should be valued in the same way as a slave. Whatever may be the character of the immigrants,—it is argued,—whether they come from the upper or the lower classes of society, whether they are desirable additions to the political or social elements in our country or not, whether they are ignorant or intelligent, skilled or unskilled,—they do represent a certain amount of brute force. There are a certain number of able-bodied laborers landed on our shores and prepared to do the rough work which we have to do. They certainly possess the value of the slave, who was also ignorant, unskilled and often degraded. The value of a slave before the war was perhaps \$800 or \$1000. Every able-bodied immigrant who lands on our shores is worth at least that, and perhaps worth more if he is a skilled laborer.

The fallacy is very similar to that exposed above,—namely, that of looking upon the man as an investment of capital. The slave *is* an investment of capital. He can be made to do a certain amount of unskilled labor by the fear of the lash. He can be fed and clothed in the cheapest possible way, so as to make

the net return from his labor as great as possible. If he is not profitable in one employment he can be turned into another, and if he ceases to be of value in one part of the country he can be sold into another part. As a last resort, if it does not pay to support him, he can be worked to death and his place taken by new purchases or new importations — as was said to be the policy at one time of the West India sugar planters, who found it more profitable to work their slaves hard for a few years and then import new ones than to keep those they had in good condition.

But the immigrant is no slave. He is a free man. He works or not as he pleases, and when and where he pleases or chance determines. His consumption is regulated only by his own desires or his ability to satisfy those desires. It may be prudent and economical ; it may be foolish, wasteful and even injurious. He may be willing to work ; he may be entirely unwilling. The only lash is that of hunger, which in many individual cases proves utterly ineffective. The trouble is that it can be escaped by stealing or begging. To compare the value of the immigrant with that of a slave is to say that the free negroes of the West Indies are of the same economic value now that they were when they were slaves ; while the fact is that liberty has simply taught them not to labor.<sup>1</sup>

There is, now, a third method of estimating the economic value of the immigrant, which is scientifically correct and which is the only one to be employed if we are determined to express in figures the value of this increase of our labor force. The value of the immigrant depends upon the amount of wealth he will add to the community before he dies. From this of course must be deducted the cost of maintaining him while he lives. The result will be his net earnings. This, capitalized at the current rate of interest, gives us the present value of the man. It is exactly on the principle of a life annuity. To calculate the value of an immigrant you must know his expectation of life, his earning capacity and his expenses or the cost of maintain-

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Froude's doleful account of the condition of the blacks in the West Indies.

ing him. The method is not easy of application, for we do not possess these data. But the method is not at all a new one and some applications of it will throw light on our problem.

Dr. William Farr, for so many years the head of the statistical department of the registrar general's office in England, in a paper read before the London statistical society in 1853<sup>1</sup> gave elaborate tables showing the present value of the future earnings of an agricultural laborer, his future cost of maintenance, and the value of the excess, which is the economic value of the man. Thus, at the age of twenty, the value of an agricultural laborer's future wages is £482; the value of the necessary cost of future maintenance is £248; and the net value of his services is therefore £234. Or, taking the whole of the male agricultural laborers into account their mean gross value was £349; the mean gross value of the subsistence of the laborer as child and man was £199, leaving £150 as the net value of agricultural laborers, or of the whole male population estimated by this standard of the agricultural laborer. To extend the value to the whole population, including females, the standard might be lowered from £150 to £110. In the thirty-ninth report of the registrar general (1877) Dr. Farr proceeds to make an application of this method to the question of the loss to England by emigration. He says:

The emigrants are chiefly adults married and unmarried; the men greatly exceeding the women in number. A few infants accompany their parents. Valuing the emigrants as the agricultural laborers have been valued at home — taking age and service into account — the value of the emigrants in 1876 was £175 per head.

If we may venture to apply this standard to the whole period it will follow that the money value of the 8,000,000 people that left England, Scotland, and Ireland in the years 1837-1876 was 1400 million pounds sterling or on an average about £35,000,000 a year.<sup>2</sup>

This valuation, \$875 *per capita*, is certainly high enough to satisfy the most ardent advocate of immigration.

Recently a German writer<sup>3</sup> has used the same method in es-

<sup>1</sup> William Farr, *Vital Statistics*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Becker, *Unsere Verluste durch Wanderung*, cited above.

imating the value of the German emigrant. Wages are lower and the margin of living much closer in Germany than in England. In fact the author reckons that, taking the whole laboring population of Germany of the class from which the emigrants come, their future earnings just cover their future consumption. The emigrants, however, are a select class as to sex and age, and he reckons the present value of the emigrant at from 800 to 900 marks, that is, from \$200 to \$225. This, Becker thinks, is a real loss to Germany. Farr takes a more cheerful view of the effect on England. He says :

It may be contended that emigration is a loss to the mother country. It seems so. It is like the export of precious goods for which there is no return. But experience proves that simultaneously with this emigration there has been a prodigious increase of the capital of the country, especially in recent years. Wages have risen and the value of the laborer has risen in proportion. . . . When the man leaves the village where he was born and bred, he leaves the market open to his fellows, he removes to a field where his work is in demand, and carries his fortune with him. It is the same way when he emigrates to the colonies. His parents in rearing him have expended their gains in the way most agreeable to themselves. They have on an average five children, instead of two or three, or none. Taking a wider view, the emigrants create articles of primary use with which in exchange they supply the mother country ; they have sent to England in the thirty-nine years wheat, cotton, wool, gold to the value of hundreds of millions.

But whatever the gain or loss to the home country, both authors are agreed that there is a gain to the new country and that this gain is measured in this way. In fact, as wages are so much higher in the United States and living not very much dearer, the present value of the laborer is higher here than it was at home.

There is the same fallacy in this estimate as in the other two. The present capitalized value of the laborer's future wages depends on his having an opportunity to earn those wages. The immigrant has an economic value only if there is opportunity for him to work. He is of use to us only if we can make him useful. This will depend on his character and capacity and on the work still to be done in this country and the number of

men we have to do it. This brings us back to the question: Do we need the immigrant? Here we have an immense labor force offered us. Can we make use of it? And if we do make use of it, what effect will it have on the value of the present labor in the country? The answer to these questions is difficult if not impossible. Some considerations of the following sort may be suggestive.

In order to form any opinion on the question, whether or not we can make use of the immigrants, it is necessary to know what they can do, that is, what their occupation or profession is; and, again, to know whether they settle in that part of our country where such occupation can be successfully pursued. I believe far too little attention has been paid to these two points. Immigration has been welcomed as so much addition to our labor force, or denounced as a burden to our poor rates, without considering whether it is of the right sort or in the right place. But that determines most often whether it is to be a gain or a burden.

It is not probable that our statistics of the occupations of immigrants are very accurate in detail. They are collected in too hurried and careless a way to be strictly correct. But for our present purpose they are sufficient to show that the mass of the immigration is of common, unskilled labor. The statistics collected by the United States<sup>1</sup> show that nearly one-half of

<sup>1</sup> TOTAL IMMIGRATION CLASSIFIED BY OCCUPATION.

| YEAR. | PROFESSIONAL. | SKILLED. | MISCELLANEOUS. | OCCUPATION NOT STATED. | WITHOUT OCCUPATION. | TOTAL.    |
|-------|---------------|----------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 1873  | 2,980         | 48,792   | 168,724        | 4,868                  | 234,439             | 459,803   |
| 1874  | 2,477         | 38,700   | 117,041        | 4,233                  | 150,889             | 313,339   |
| 1875  | 2,426         | 33,803   | 84,546         | 1,201                  | 105,432             | 227,498   |
| 1876  | 2,400         | 24,200   | 72,275         | 910                    | 70,201              | 169,986   |
| 1877  | 1,185         | 21,006   | 55,650         | 673                    | 62,643              | 141,857   |
| 1878  | 1,510         | 16,531   | 57,806         | 738                    | 61,884              | 138,469   |
| 1879  | 1,639         | 21,362   | 73,053         | 897                    | 80,875              | 177,826   |
| 1880  | 1,773         | 49,929   | 188,109        | 2,194                  | 215,252             | 457,257   |
| 1881  | 2,812         | 66,457   | 244,492        | 8,140                  | 347,530             | 669,431   |
| 1882  | 2,992         | 72,664   | 310,501        | 10,619                 | 392,210             | 788,992   |
| 1883  | 2,450         | 62,505   | 216,549        | 46,600                 | 275,658             | 603,322   |
| 1884  | 2,284         | 55,061   | 184,195        | 31,665                 | 245,387             | 518,592   |
| 1885  | 2,097         | 39,817   | 141,702        | 15,398                 | 190,332             | 395,346   |
| 1886  | 2,078         | 36,522   | 137,651        | 496                    | 157,456             | 334,203   |
| Total | 31,803        | 587,349  | 2,052,294      | 128,782                | 2,596,188           | 5,396,416 |

the immigrants are without occupation, this including of course the greater part of the women and children. It appears, also, that of the immigrants with occupations about 1 per cent are professional, about 22 per cent are skilled artisans, and 76 per cent are unskilled laborers—for that is what the column "miscellaneous" really amounts to. In other words three-fourths of the immigrants are unskilled laborers.

These statistics are confirmed by those from the other side of the water. In 1886, out of 54,507 adult males (12 years of age and upwards) of British and Irish origin, who migrated from Great Britain to the United States, 26,096 were general laborers, 9,171 were agricultural laborers, gardeners, carters, *etc.*, and 12,906 were of occupations not stated.<sup>1</sup> These latter were either boys or common laborers, so that it is entirely safe to say that three-fourths of the emigrants of British and Irish origin are laborers.

Of the emigrants from Germany in 1886 that came by the way of Hamburg, 33.58 per cent were returned as of no occupation. These are presumably the women and children. 24.89 per cent were laborers, 15.87 per cent were agriculturists, 16.70 per cent were of the industrial class and 8.96 per cent were of the commercial class. Excluding the persons without occupations, the

The same table expressed in percentages will give the following, no account being taken of the column "occupation not stated":

| YEAR. | PROFES-<br>SIONAL. | SKILLED.  | MISCEL-<br>LANEOUS. | WITHOUT<br>OCCUPA-<br>TION. | YEAR. | PROFES-<br>SIONAL. | SKILLED.  | MISCEL-<br>LANEOUS. | WITHOUT<br>OCCUPA-<br>TION. |
|-------|--------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------|--------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
|       | Per cent.          | Per cent. | Per cent.           | Per cent.                   |       | Per cent.          | Per cent. | Per cent.           | Per cent.                   |
| 1873  | 0.8                | 10.6      | 36.7                | 50.9                        | 1881  | 0.4                | 9.9       | 36.5                | 51.9                        |
| 1874  | 0.7                | 12.3      | 37.3                | 48.1                        | 1882  | 0.38               | 9.2       | 39.3                | 49.7                        |
| 1875  | 1.0                | 14.7      | 37.1                | 41.9                        | 1883  | 0.4                | 10.3      | 35.8                | 45.6                        |
| 1876  | 1.4                | 14.3      | 42.5                | 41.3                        | 1884  | 0.44               | 10.6      | 35.5                | 47.3                        |
| 1877  | 1.3                | 14.9      | 39.2                | 44.1                        | 1885  | 0.5                | 10.0      | 35.9                | 49.7                        |
| 1878  | 1.0                | 11.9      | 41.8                | 44.7                        | 1886  | ...                | 10.93     | 41.2                | 47.11                       |
| 1879  | 0.9                | 12.0      | 41.6                | 46.0                        | Total | 0.59               | 10.9      | 38.0                | 48.1                        |
| 1880  | 0.4                | 10.9      | 41.1                | 47.0                        |       |                    |           |                     |                             |

Emigration and Immigration: Reports of Consular officers of the United States, pp. 3, 4.

<sup>1</sup> Statistical Tables relating to Emigration and Immigration from and into the United Kingdom in the year 1886.

laborers and agriculturists constituted 61 per cent of those emigrants having occupations.<sup>1</sup>

Of the emigrants from Italy in 1885 (14 years of age and upwards), 59.63 per cent were husbandmen and shepherds, 12.43 per cent were navvies, porters, and other day laborers, 13.30 per cent were artisans and operatives, and 5.49 per cent were masons and stone cutters. That is, more than 72 per cent were farmers or laborers.<sup>2</sup>

It appears, then, that three-fourths of our immigrants are agriculturists or common laborers. Can we make use of that kind of labor? One more analysis will be necessary before we answer that question. One of the greatest misconceptions about this whole subject is, I believe, that all we have to do with this mass of immigrants is to put them on the land "out West" and make farmers of them, and farming is commonly conceived of as an unskilled occupation. Now the great mass of these laborers are not farmers at all or even farm laborers, as will be seen by reference to the statistics of Great Britain and Germany above. In the statistics of the United States, also, the farmers are always outnumbered by the laborers pure and simple. Thus in 1886 there were returned 20,600 farmers and 86,853 laborers. Even of these so-called farmers it is to be remarked that they are not farmers in our sense of the word. They are the farm laborers accustomed to do the rough hand work on the farms of Europe. They do not possess either the skill, or the capital, or the knowledge of modern methods and the use of agricultural machinery, requisite to enter into the ranks of the farmers of this country. At best they can only drift on to the farms and become farm laborers, and perhaps after a while, by thrift and industry, start kitchen gardening in the neighborhood of a large city. However, these farmers and farm laborers can be easily disposed of. There is plenty of land in this country, and if they will really become farmers or farm laborers there will be no trouble in providing them places and opportunity to earn a living. But the great mass of laborers are not farmers and

<sup>1</sup> Bulletin de l'Institut international de statistique, 1887, 2<sup>ème</sup> livraison, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Statistica della emigrazione italiani per gli anni 1884 e 1885, p. xix.

are not fitted to become farmers. If you put them on the land they would not know how to cultivate it. Of their own disposition they are less likely to go into farming than anything else, because a farmer must rely to a great extent upon himself. This self-reliance is the quality they possess least of all. The number of immigrants of this class is very large, and it is this class that increases most with every increase of immigration. How numerous they are will be seen by the following figures:

NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS CLASSED AS LABORERS, 1880-1886.

|                |         |                |         |
|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| 1880 . . . . . | 105,012 | 1884 . . . . . | 106,478 |
| 1881 . . . . . | 147,816 | 1885 . . . . . | 83,068  |
| 1882 . . . . . | 209,605 | 1886 . . . . . | 86,853  |
| 1883 . . . . . | 136,071 |                |         |
| Total. . . . . |         |                | 874,903 |

These are the men who build our railroads, who clean our streets, who handle our freight, who are employed more or less in every factory for lifting and moving heavy weights, trucking, cleaning up, *etc.* Can we make use of these men and in this number? He would be a bold man who would assert that the United States, with its miles of railroad building every year, with its canals and river transportation, with its constantly expanding factory system, with its use of machinery whereby unskilled labor can be more and more utilized, cannot furnish employment to this common labor. In one sense, the newer a country is the more of this unskilled labor it needs, because it has more of the primary work to do—reclaiming the soil and making channels of communication. No one can look upon a map of the United States and see the immense unclaimed territory, without saying to himself: There is room here for the unskilled labor of the world in reclaiming these deserts, in draining these swamps, in opening up these distant regions. In the face of this generalization I shall only venture the following practical suggestions.

In every country this unskilled labor is of itself the most abundant. It constitutes the mass of the community. In it is found that great number of men who earn their daily bread literally by the sweat of their brow. In it are found all those who

are not particularly intelligent and who, either from lack of inclination or want of opportunity, have not been trained to any great skill. They are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water, who form the lowest but necessary stratum of every society. I venture to assert, not only that they are present in every community in sufficient number, but that no community has ever found it difficult to produce them. What is difficult to produce is the intelligent and skilled workman,—the man who can take the initiative himself, who not only does work but makes work. Possibly fifty years ago we needed more of this common labor than we could produce ourselves; but we are not in that early civilization now. We have been receiving, too, an immense quantity of this kind of labor during these years. Ever since the great movement of 1846 the immigration has been predominantly of this character. We have in our employ hundreds of thousands of these unskilled laborers and their descendants.

I would suggest, again, that the progress of our civilization renders the demand for this unskilled labor less than it formerly was. We have not built all our railroads, but the country is fairly well opened. The first work of the pioneer has been done and will never have to be done again. We have not brought all our land under cultivation, but we have taken up the better part of it, and there is no reason why we should desire to cultivate that inferior part which will make a less return for the labor. Then again the progress of civilization has enabled us to apply machinery to much of this work. The steam drill, the dredge, the derrick, do the work which was formerly done by men. We accomplish more with a few men than our ancestors did with hundreds. Steam takes the place of human muscle, and it is just as well that it is so. There is no advantage in our growing into the condition of those countries where it does not pay to use machinery because labor is so cheap. Let us seek increased cheapness not by making our labor cheap but by inventions which shall make our labor effective.

Finally, I would suggest that to make this unskilled labor effective there ought to be some guarantee that it shall get to

the place where it is needed, not merely stay where it happens to land. One would say that the place for this mere muscular labor is on the frontier, where it can do the rough work required. There is absolutely no guarantee for its getting there. The census of 1880 showed an immense preponderance of the foreign-born in the cities, as did the census of Massachusetts for 1885. The truth about these unskilled laborers is, as every one knows although we cannot prove it by statistics, that they are generally stranded in the large cities where they form an ignorant, often depraved mass, living from hand to mouth, a burden to the poor rate and a social incubus on the community. This unskilled labor is not in its right place, the place where it aids the development of the country, but is in directly the wrong place, adding to the complexities of that already complex problem, the government of large cities.

We turn now to the second question, *viz.* : Does this immigration have any effect on the laboring class of this country in lowering wages by competition and in finally lowering the standard of living? The direct effect on skilled labor would not at first glance appear to be very great. The number of skilled artisans who come to this country is not large. For instance, in 1886, the only classes of which the number of immigrants was more than 1000 were as follows :

|                                  |      |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Bakers . . . . .                 | 1209 |
| Blacksmiths . . . . .            | 1420 |
| Butchers . . . . .               | 1190 |
| Carpenters and joiners . . . . . | 3678 |
| Clerks . . . . .                 | 3027 |
| Mariners . . . . .               | 1803 |
| Masons . . . . .                 | 1835 |
| Mechanics . . . . .              | 1886 |
| Miners . . . . .                 | 3469 |
| Shoemakers . . . . .             | 1681 |
| Tailors . . . . .                | 2682 |
| Tobacco manufacturers . . . . .  | 1160 |

It is impossible to say how accurate these statistics are. The British returns are very similar — although it is impossible to compare them with the United States returns of skilled

artisans coming from England and Ireland, because the classification is different. Among the emigrants from the United Kingdom of British and Irish origin coming to the United States in 1886, the only occupations represented by more than 1000 were as follows :

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Bricklayers, masons, plasterers, slaters . . . . . | 1590 |
| Carpenters and joiners . . . . .                   | 1661 |
| Clerks and agents . . . . .                        | 1812 |
| Mechanics . . . . .                                | 5945 |
| Miners and quarrymen . . . . .                     | 3524 |

It is evident that such an immigration as this would not cause any severe competition ; but it is evident also that it does not account for the number of foreigners in the so-called skilled occupations. The census of 1880 reported the nativity of the persons engaged in manufactures and mechanical and mining industries in the United States as follows :

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| United States . . . . .   | 2,611,325 |
| Ireland. . . . .          | 284,175   |
| Germany . . . . .         | 368,110   |
| Great Britain . . . . .   | 225,730   |
| Scandinavia . . . . .     | 44,615    |
| British America . . . . . | 153,935   |
| Other countries . . . . . | 149,292   |
| <hr/>                     |           |
| Total. . . . .            | 3,837,112 |

This would show that out of all the persons engaged in these industries 31.95 per cent are foreign-born.

The strength of this foreign-born element in particular occupations is shown by the following table :

PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGNERS IN EACH OCCUPATION.<sup>1</sup>

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Apprentices to trades . . . . . | 9.24  |
| Bakers . . . . .                | 56.16 |
| Blacksmiths. . . . .            | 27.29 |
| Boot and shoe makers . . . . .  | 35.76 |
| Brick and tile makers . . . . . | 31.83 |
| Butchers . . . . .              | 38.34 |
| Cabinet makers . . . . .        | 41.77 |

<sup>1</sup> Tenth Census, vol. ii., p. xxxvi.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Carpenters and joiners . . . . .                     | 22.96 |
| Carriage and wagon makers . . . . .                  | 24.55 |
| Cigar makers . . . . .                               | 44.57 |
| Coopers . . . . .                                    | 32.91 |
| Cotton mill operatives . . . . .                     | 44.63 |
| Employees in manufacturing (not specified) . . . . . | 28.44 |
| Engineers and firemen . . . . .                      | 27.18 |
| Fishermen and oystermen . . . . .                    | 26.67 |
| Gold and silver workers and jewellers . . . . .      | 27.09 |
| Harness and saddle makers . . . . .                  | 25.50 |
| Iron and steel workers . . . . .                     | 36.33 |
| Leather curriers and tanners, <i>etc.</i> . . . . .  | 45.74 |
| Lumber men and raftsmen. . . . .                     | 34.18 |
| Machinists . . . . .                                 | 30.12 |
| Manufacturers . . . . .                              | 26.27 |
| Marble and stone cutters . . . . .                   | 44.59 |
| Masons, brick and stone . . . . .                    | 35.37 |
| Mill and factory operatives. . . . .                 | 25.79 |
| Millers . . . . .                                    | 15.37 |
| Milliners, dressmakers and seamstresses . . . . .    | 16.05 |
| Miners . . . . .                                     | 53.89 |
| Painters and varnishers . . . . .                    | 23.95 |
| Paper mill operatives . . . . .                      | 33.20 |
| Plasterers . . . . .                                 | 27.56 |
| Printers, lithographers and stereotypers . . . . .   | 17.00 |
| Saw and planing mill operatives . . . . .            | 26.71 |
| Tailors and tailoresses . . . . .                    | 53.52 |
| Tinners and tinware makers . . . . .                 | 24.14 |
| Tobacco factory operatives . . . . .                 | 8.69  |
| Woollen mill operatives. . . . .                     | 39.28 |

This table is worthy of remark in two respects. It does not seem possible to account for all the foreigners in the ordinary trades like the bakers, blacksmiths, butchers, cabinet makers, carpenters, coopers, stone cutters, masons, plasterers, *etc.*, by the statistics of immigration. These statistics must be defective, or else large numbers must learn these trades after they come here. In respect to other occupations, like cotton-mill operatives, boot and shoe makers, mill operatives, paper-mill operatives and other factory workers it simply means that with the introduction of machinery the great mass of those employed

in these occupations are really unskilled workmen. It is here that the unskilled and miscellaneous categories in the statistics of immigration find their resting place. This so-called unskilled labor of Europe crowds into the factories of America, driving out labor that was intelligent if not actually skilled. As has so often been said, the Irish drove the New England girls out of the factories of Massachusetts and now the French Canadians are driving out the Irish.

It is here that the American or the Americanized laborer is being subjected to the most strenuous competition. This labor from Europe is not inaptly labeled "miscellaneous" by the bureau of statistics. It comes ready to take up any occupation in which it can earn a living. I do not suppose that the French Canadians when they come into the United States enter themselves as cotton-mill operatives. Probably they have never seen a cotton mill in their lives. They are only potentially cotton-mill operatives, but they fill up the cotton mills all the same. So very likely the Hungarians who are imported to dig coal in the Hocking valley are not miners until they get here. They take the places of the former miners, however, just as if they were *bona fide* miners.<sup>1</sup>

Immigration subjects the laborer of America to a stress of competition such as no laboring class in the world has ever been called upon to endure. All the barriers of locality, distance, custom, nationality and skill have been broken down, and like the challenger of old he is obliged to face every new comer. His labor is literally a commodity, and he is paid the market value of it without any regard to its cost of production or its future supply. No one employs him because he is a man, or a neighbor, or a compatriot, but simply because he will take the least wages. The national pride in him and in his work has ceased. No one buys his goods because they are his product, but only because they are cheap.

It has for a long time been a dogma of economists that labor suffers from its immobility. It is unable to transfer itself

<sup>1</sup> This fallacy has been neatly exposed by Mr. Fred. Perry Powers in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, December, 1887.

readily from one employment to another or from one place to another in order to get higher wages. Cairnes said that competition affected wages only within certain groups. Where an occupation requires skill, it is impossible for others to enter it. It is true that the new generation may be trained into it, if it does not require too long an apprenticeship, and thus competition be introduced, but this process is difficult and very gradual. So Fawcett delighted to point out that agricultural wages were considerably lower in one English county than in another only a few miles distant, owing to the inertia of the English agricultural laborer. Professor J. B. Clark, however, has demonstrated that the barriers between groups are steadily giving way owing to the spread of intelligence and education and the introduction of machinery, which does away with the skill formerly required. The immobility of labor in respect to place is being rapidly removed by the facilities for transportation and by immigration. When a strike occurs on the street railroads of New York city, unskilled labor flocks from all the neighboring cities to get the job. The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railroad brings men from Pennsylvania, and in a few days it has duplicated its entire force of engineers and firemen. This mobility of labor is greatly assisted by the employers, who go so far as to import laborers from Europe in order to escape the demands of their men. In no country of the world has this barrier of distance and national prejudice been broken down so completely as in the United States. Our workmen are subject to competition from the world. Almost every strike at the present time ends in the defeat of the strikers.

For the laboring class of this country, with its high wages and its high standard of living, it is a misfortune to have these barriers of distance, of acquired skill and of nationality fall away so completely. It renders their position one of great instability and uncertainty. It makes it impossible that they should calculate or provide for their future or that of their children. It destroys local attachments and settled feelings. It renders efforts to better their condition either by organization or by thrift and prudence almost entirely futile. Competition among laborers there will always be; and it is not desirable that they

should be entire masters of the situation, for absolute power is no safer in their hands than in those of any other class of the community. But with the present mobility of labor described above, the competition from the laborers already in this country will be sufficient to secure us from any monopoly of labor. Immigration is not needed for this purpose. And immigration brings a stress of competition which it is not fair to ask any class of the community to bear when it concerns their daily bread. No country has ever gained by destroying the content, the prosperity, the hopefulness of its laboring class, the mass of the people.

Finally, it can be demonstrated that this competition which comes through immigration has the tendency to lower the standard of living in this country. The reason why Italians, Hungarians and Poles are imported to work on our railroads and in our mines is not the dearth of labor, but the willingness of these immigrants to take less wages than the laborers in this country can accept. But the outcome of such competition will be to reduce our whole laboring class to the standard of life of these new comers. Such competition can in no sense be said to be desirable. It makes commodities cheaper, not by increased industry and ingenuity, but by reducing the civilization of the community. Such a result is not only a wrong to our laboring class but is suicidal to ourselves.

In conclusion, it may be argued, I believe, with considerable show of reason that in our present stage of development we no longer need the immigrant. We do not need him to increase our population, for that is increasing fast enough by natural causes. The money he brings with him is not enough to be worth considering. The economic value of the immigrant himself is considerable, but is not to be measured by any mere calculation of what it cost to bring him up or even by estimating the net value of his future earnings. His value depends on the use we can make of him. It does not appear that we have any present need of this extraneous supply of unskilled labor. But it does appear that its constant influx is bringing upon the laboring class a distressing competition, which threatens finally to lower the standard of living of the whole community.

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